"ACRES OF GOLD"

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April 1905

The Black Cat

Acres of Gold.
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Franklin Pierce Carrigan.

Do Not Talk with the Motorman.
E. H. Mayde.

Where Burglars are Welcome.
$100 Prize.
Fred S. Brown.

The Monarch of Bobo.
Will Lisenbee.

The Girl with the Million Yen.
$150 Prize.
A. W. North.

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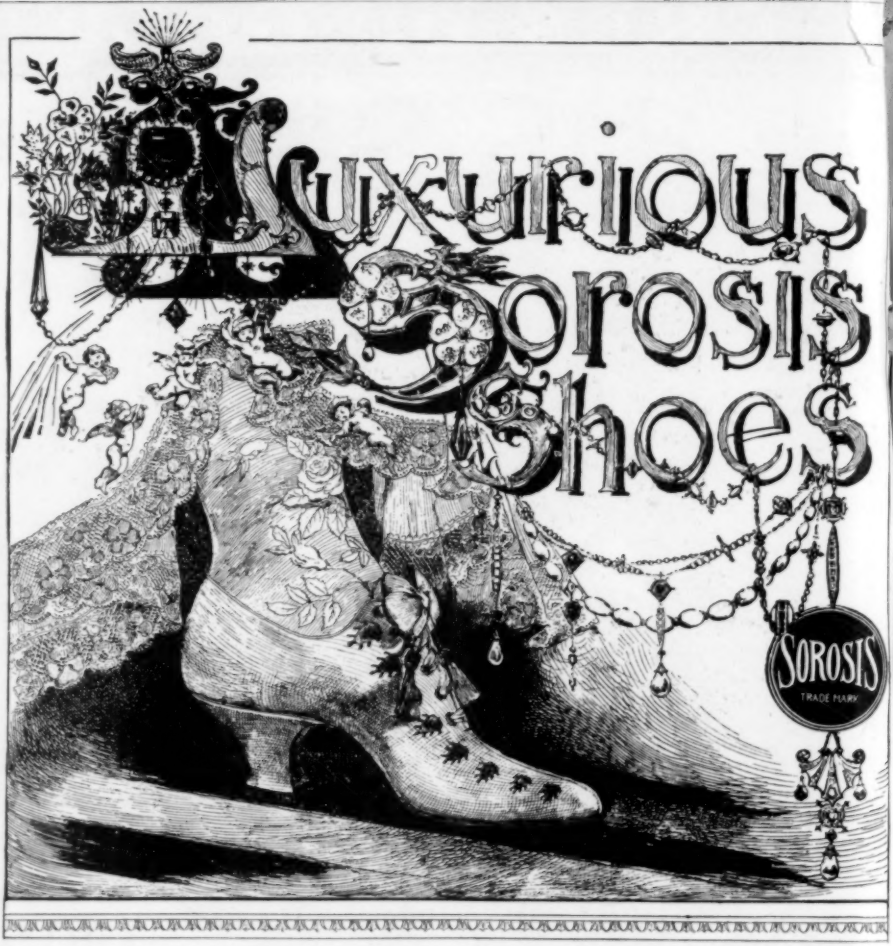

ULTRA-FASHIONABLE THINGS

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Acres of Gold.*

BY FRANKLIN PIERCE CARRIGAN.

"TIE th' dog loose, Abie, an' come here once."

Mrs. Miller wrung the soap-suds from her hands, then, after rinsing them in a tub of blue-water, she dried them on the roller-towel that hung on the inside of the shed door, now standing open. She had been washing calico sheets. They hung on a line at the lower end of the farmyard over the beds of daffodils. Calico sheets take the place of muslin or linen, among the Mennonite farm-wives, doubtless due to a sense of economy, as well as an evidence of plainness and a renunciation of the world's vanity.

She made a queer picture as she stood there among the tubs — a picture that has seldom been painted, although often drawn, for one is apt to find life among the Mennonites more interesting than attractive, hence the field is seldom invaded by the painter. The white cap, always worn by the female members of the Mennonite faith, covered her head and ears, and made her years seem more than they really were. Her feet were encased in flat-heeled slippers, made of black felt, with short, broad tongues. She had tucked her

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brown petticoat in at the waist, and her white-stockinged ankles were in view. A green apron covered the front of her petticoat, and there was a small black shawl pinned about her shoulders.

The little boy "tied th' dog loose," as bidden, which in better English meant to untie him. He resembled the woman, having her sharp, wedge-like features, which looked as if they could cut even destiny, if need be. He wore long trousers and suspenders, and walked with long, quick strides as if his soul's redemption depended on his getting to a place quickly. He had been some distance from the house when Mrs. Miller called, but it was not long before he reached the steps of the shed.

"Have ye seen th' carts o' stones that have been passin' the pike on all mornin' ?" she asked.

"Yes; I seen them th' cornfield from, where I was helpin' pop plough."

"An' didn't yer father anything say, er didn't ye nothin' say t' him."

"I said I wondered where th' was goin' t', but he asked me what fer I be tending t' other people's business, an' said I had better my eyes on th' furrows keep, an' not look s' much th' road at."

"Yer pop nothin' but farmin' knows, an' nothin' will know ever else. It's kind o' strange about them stone I feel, an' I want ye th' last cart t' follow once, an' see where it's takin' them t'. I'll give ye the scraps o' th' dinner pies if ye get quick back."

The boy hurried down the lane which opened on the pike. Although a cart filled with stones had passed the farmhouse some time since, it had only reached the summit of the hill, the ascent of which was long and steep. There were willow trees at short distances along the pike, and the wind blew their slender branches in green, vertical lines across the gray sky. It was not many minutes before Abie was close to the cart, but he saw the driver was "citified," and as the Mennonite dislikes holding converse with other than his own kin, except when business or the occasion demands it, he kept in the rear until the cart approached a large brick house farther up the pike, in front of which it deposited its weighty contents. Abie noticed there were many similar heaps, which extended to the end of the second field from the house. He

ran all the way home, only pausing now and then to regain his normal breathing condition.

Mrs. Miller in the meantime had put the tubs away, and was busy making pies for dinner. She bent forward in eager expectancy as her son entered the kitchen. During the half-hour of her waiting her nature seemed to have imbibed some of the tartness of the apples she had cut into the pies.

"What fer ye didn't wipe yer feet?" she exclaimed, as Abie crossed the room.

He did not seem to hear her rebuke in his eagerness to communicate the information he had gleaned since his departure.

"Mom, th' stones in front o' Uncle Hen's place th're dumpin'!" he cried excitedly. "Th' fields ain't ploughed; they're jist as th' was th' winter through. What fer d' ye think Uncle Hen wants th' stones. I guess he's goin' t' build — ain't?"

"Mein Gott in himmel!" exclaimed Mrs. Miller, almost dropping in her excitement the pie which she was putting into the oven. "I do think ye're right. Was th' stones many?"

"There was little piles o' them th' pike along fer two fields. It wasn't common stones, but stones like new churches down at Lancaster is built of."

"They much money cost. It's wrong in his head yer uncle's gone, an' it's better heads he about him wants. I've had that thought since he t' Florida went. Go tell yer pop t' come in once."

Abie hurried to the field where his father had been at work ploughing since early morning. It was a broad field, running down the side of a hill. The long furrows, which the plough had just turned, were to be planted with corn. A few early robins, more courageous than their companions, who still lingered among southern trees and shrubs, hopped over the furrows in search of worms, or stood with head thrown back and breast of flame extended, trying to veil in a seeming air of boldness their real timidity and shyness.

Mr. Miller had nearly finished ploughing the field, and as the distant tones of the poorhouse bell told him it would soon be dinner time, he accompanied his son home. During their walk to the farmhouse Abie told him of his mother's anxiety about the stones, but he made no remark. Like most minds that feel the hidden

influences at work in nature, he frequently found silence a more formidable weapon than speech.

"I guess Abie has told ye th' stones of," said Mrs. Miller, as her husband entered the kitchen, after washing his face and hands in a basin at the pump.

"It none o' my business ain't," he returned, seating himself at the table, where stewed meat and potatoes were steaming in a large platter.

"But it my business I'll make, even if he t' me ain't spoke fer twenty years. He goin' t' build, an' that money costs. He right in his head is not — people t' Florida don't go that are. He ain't never turned plain, an' that ye know; an' it's a stone house he wants when one o' brick is plenty enough good. I've heerd he's carpet on all th' floors put, an' pictures on th' walls hung, when that money interest at th' bank could git. He ain't th' fields ploughed, an' perhaps that he won't do. He's wrong in his head, and stop him must we. There ain't no one his money t' git but me, an' o' that there won't any be unless we somethin' do. I thought because this afternoon it so much like rain looks, an' in the fields ye wouldn't want t' be, we might t' Hen's go over."

Mrs. Miller had seated herself in a rocker by the window. Her voice rang shrilly above the creaks of the chair, which was slowly moving backward under the impetuosity of her movements. Abie and his father were eating their dinner.

"There I won't go," said Mr. Miller, "ner it's no use goin' on so, mom. It none o' my business ain't, an' nothin' will I do."

"But there's a law, pop — law there is t' stop him. Th' church don't allow us t' go t' law, but when Hen is head wrong has gone, it nothin' kin say."

"But that ye'll have t' prove, mom, an' may b' ye can't. For me I think that right he is."

"Th' money ye don't want t' use — ain't ye don't ?"

"I ain't got no right it to."

"Well, I have, an' it I'll do myself, pop Miller — I'll do it jist myself. I'll speak t' Hen first."

"It ain't likely t' ye' he'll now speak when he ain't did it fer twenty years. He don't forgit, mom, though you don't no more remember."

"I guess it's about Barbara ye mean — ain't ye don't ?"

"I've sometimes thought right ye didn't do. Ye mightn't have treated her so that away she went, an' ye might have buried her when she came back friendless an' died."

"That's enough, pop Miller. I might have knowed what ye'd say. I never ain't it regretted — there. Th' enemy had her — that's sure. She would not t' meetin' go, an' at th' table I said she would not eat. She wanted t' go t' Lancaster, and I heerd her say often she would like t' Philadelphia t' go. I told her t' go an' stay."

"Oh, hush! an' come yer dinner git."

"I no dinner want. Ach Gott! men kin eat always. Abie, you ready th' buggy git. I'll t' Uncle Hen's go when th' fire I've outened an' the' dishes washed."

Mr. Miller made no reply. Abie cast furtive glances at them. Mrs. Miller rose from the chair, and crossing the room, took a pie from the side of the kitchen sink where she had placed it to cool. She next cut it into four slices, and placed it on the table.

When dinner was over, Mr. Miller bade Abie get the buggy ready for his mother, and then come to him in the field. The child would have rather accompanied his mother to his Uncle Hen's, for he was at the age when curiosity is dominant in the mind, and will prevail in spite of the dictates of good judgment; but he knew better than disobey his father, whose word is an unbroken law so far as the Mennonite youth is concerned.

Mrs. Miller "outened" the fire, and washed the dishes and pots. In an hour's time she was driving up the hill to her brother's, a little black bonnet on her head, a black shawl about her shoulders, and the reins clasped in her black-gloved hands.

Henry Mennon was a well-to-do farmer. His house was two miles from the Miller farm. It was a large brick structure, with green shutters and white doors, built in that unostentatious style of architecture so prevalent among the farmers of Lancaster County. It stood close to the pike, with a small garden in front and a spacious barn in the rear. There was a small orchard back of the barn, and the fields lay beyond this, and on either side. The tops of the greening willows told where the Conestoga creek flowed through the fertile meadowlands. Some people said the

reason Henry Mennon's fields were so productive was because they bordered the creek. The farm had come to him from his father. Mrs. Miller, who had been Amelia Mennon, received nearly the equivalent in money, but no lands. Henry had never married, and there was little likelihood that he ever would, so Mrs. Miller of late had grown to look upon his possessions as hers by right of heritage, in spite of the fact, too, that they had quarrelled twenty years before, and Henry had never spoken to her since, nor entered her home. She was wont to say "blood thicker than water was, an' Gott she knowed would Hen's heart turn t' th' faith before th' end."

Barbara Sutton was Abe Miller's niece — a daughter of his only sister. He was her nearest relative. Her parents dying when she was sixteen, and leaving nothing for her future maintenance, she had no alternative but to accept when her uncle offered her a home. Mrs. Miller's consent was given reluctantly, nor did she spare the rod nor tongue when Barbara's work or conduct were in dispute. Her two years' residence at the Miller farm was one of absolute martyrdom and almost brutal drudgery — a life that in its monotony and ignorance could never foster ambition, or the out-reaching of a mind that longed for broader roadways and more productive pastures. She had a sweet face that looked sad and demure under its gray bonnet. Her form was round and slender, nor could the severity of the typical plain gray garb, in vogue among the young female members of the Mennonite sect, and cut in a manner not calculated to display grace of form, altogether hide its natural curves. She loved soft shades of blue, red and brown. She preferred a hat to a bonnet. Her heart beat fast at the prospect of getting to town market mornings, for Lancaster was a wonderful city to her — the largest and most beautiful one she had ever seen. She had dreams of Philadelphia and even of New York; but it pained her head to think of the former place, and a mist swam before her eyes when she thought of the latter. It was not her fault if the music of far-off bells, ringing cityward, and the whistles of swift-speeding trains, filled her heart with inexpressible longings, nor if the echo of music played at the near-by Park, while a sweet soprano voice was raised in an aria from one of the recent comic operas, made her long to be nearer where

she could hear more plainly and see as well. It was rather the fault of Providence for having placed her on such a narrow plane to breathe an atmosphere of ignorance which is truly the mother of bigotry, and a blind beggar at all times.

Henry Mennon had grown to love Barbara. He at first had only pitied her for her humility and uncomplaining submission to her aunt's tyranny; but love and pity go ever hand in hand, and he longed to lift her out of uncongenial surroundings. But in those days Henry was far from well off in the world's goods. Although he was twenty-five years old, and his father's only son, he was treated no better by him than any farm-hand engaged by the day at times of sowing and reaping. There was a little log house on the Mennon farm on which Henry had cast a longing eye, and he would have been willing to take Barbara to live in the two rooms it contained; but Barbara had no money, and there were other Mennonite maids, only waiting to be asked, who had, so he knew his father would never consent to the union. True, he might have married Barbara, and run the risk of losing his father's lands, but the Mennonite knows, as we all do, that chance is a fickle mistress that often leads us a disappointing chase; and the Mennonite loves, as a father his children, the lands that bear his grain, which means wealth in the end. Love with him is an after-thought, like wine at a feast — only a necessity so long as his means permit.

Henry called to see Barbara several times, but not sufficiently often to lead his father or sister to suppose that they cared for each other any more than in a careless, cousinly way. He always saw her at meeting, and took her out in his buggy twice. It was the second buggy trip that brought upon Barbara her aunt's ire. They had driven to Lancaster while the sunset flooded the fields with amber light, and the sun had but shortly sunk behind South Mountain into the peaceful Lebanon valley far away. They drove about town until twilight fell, and then returned home by the way of Conestoga Park. An opera was being sung at the pavilion. Henry stopped the horse at the stone bridge to listen for a moment. Barbara's cheeks were flushed, and her eyes shone with pleasure. Neither of them said anything, but each divined instinctively the other's thought. Henry got out and tied the horse, then he and Barbara entered the Park. They did not go on the pavilion, but

stood without, where they could see the gay costumes, and hear the witty dialogue as well as if they were on the platform. They lingered there only an hour, but into that hour was crowded all the happiness of Barbara's life. She would have been glad to remain longer, but she feared her aunt's anger, so she pressed Henry to come away. She need not have told her aunt about her disobedience, but her sin lay like a leaden weight on her conscience. Life at the Miller farm had been bitterly hard before, but it became unbearable after her confession, and to make her misconduct worse, she could not truthfully say she was sorry; so she must eat no more at her aunt's table, but in the shed without; nor could Mrs. Miller see why she should be called to live under the same roof with one who had so openly transgressed and had no sorrow or repentance for her terrible sin. Henry tried to make the path smoother by saying it was his fault, but there could be no forgiveness when there was no true repentance. The acknowledgement of her guilt was as nothing compared with the fact that she had found pleasure in it.

Barbara felt instinctively that Henry cared for her, and he had become very dear to her; but she made no outward sign, and slaved on in her humble, uncomplaining way, seeing him only when he passed in his buggy, for he never called to see her after that night. His father had heard of their escapade, as Mrs. Miller told Barbara, and he knew the consequences if he married contrary to his wishes, especially a girl without money, and one so deeply in sin, and so ready to be tempted by the enemy. She took Henry's silence as a sanction of her aunt's assertions, and finally passed out of their lives. Her flight worried Abe Miller more than he cared to say, and he, unknown to his wife, and Henry, unknown to his father, made several unsuccessful attempts to find her. Rumors now and again reached them that she had gone to Philadelphia. It was three years afterwards that Mrs. Miller, going to the front door, saw her leaning against the post of the porch, as white as the snow that lay deep over the lanes and fields. She did not know her at first, for she was garbed in city clothes. Perhaps she could not even obtain the crumbs of existence that are scattered to thousands in a great city which gives loaves to few; or perhaps a longing to be near Henry, even though it were to again wear the har-

ness of drudgery she once thought she could never more don, had drawn her once more to the Miller farm. But Mrs. Miller was blind to her pleading eyes and thread-bare garments, and almost as soon as the door had opened, it was closed upon her. She must have thought to try to retrace her steps to the city, or to some other farmstead, but her strength gave out; and when Abe Miller returned from town that night with Abie asleep on the back of the sleigh, it was at Barbara's dead body the horse shied.

There were angry words between him and his wife that night, and she never knew how near to utterance had been the thought that they could live together no more. In spite of all his pleading, she would not have the body of the dead girl brought into the house, so he wrapped it in the sleigh-blanket, and drove over to Henry's. His father had died in the meantime and been laid beside his mother in the burying lot which stood at the corner of one of the wheat-fields. Nobody ever heard the conversation that passed between Henry and Abe Miller that night, but from that time Henry never looked at his sister or crossed her threshold. Old Ella Mentzer, who kept house for him, said he passed the night alone with Barbara's dead body, and now and again (or she may have imagined it) she thought she heard a sob. He worked hard, and his wealth grew; but the meeting-house on the hill saw him no more, and he lived the life of a recluse, going only to market twice a week, and at short intervals to Philadelphia, where a portion of his wealth was invested.

When Mrs. Miller reached her brother's home, the rain had begun to fall. One of the hired men placed her horse and buggy under shelter in the barn. Old Ella Mentzer threw up her hands in amazement when she saw who her visitor was.

"Ach! a mistake ye've made — ain 't ? er was ye passin' an' come in th' rain out."

"No," was the reply; "I've come t' see Hen once."

"T' see him ye better not had — ain't ye won't ?"

"Be he not home ?"

"In there he be," said Ella, pointing to a door at the side of the hall. "He won't see ye though."

"Ye needn't him tell I've come. I'll go in unbeknowns."

Mrs. Miller cast looks of disapproval at the pictures which hung

on the wall and the Brussels carpet on the floor — even the wall paper came in for a share of her disfavor. They were of the world; they cost money, too, and money brought interest in bank. She entered the room, where she found her brother seated in a rocker, reading the morning paper, which one of the men had brought from the city. He rose to his feet when he saw her, and took a few steps forward to leave the room, but she barred the way. He resembled her in no way. His form was tall and well-knit, but hard work and youthful privations had left their marks upon him, for his shoulders were stooped, and his broad, sunburned brow deeply lined. His eyes were kindly, but his mouth had a determined expression, as if it were not well to cross his will.

"We ain't much o' each other seen o' late — ain't, Hen."

He made no reply.

"I guess yer mind about speakin' ye had better change, fer I ain't goin' till ye do."

He grunted. The utterance he made could only be likened to the grunt of a pig.

Mrs. Miller did not know the meaning of the word diplomacy, and it is doubtful if she would have added it to her vocabulary if she had, so she mentioned the object of her visit at once."

"I've saw th' stones comin' all th' mornin' through, an' come over t' ask ye if it's a house ye be buildin'."

A look that boded his sister no good came over Henry's face.

"I t' ye ain't spoken fer twenty years, an' I never meant t' again once. T' home ye had better go, fer here I want ye not."

"But I've came t' tell ye th' church no house o' stone allows, an' the' one yer now livin' in is plenty good. It seems t' me that foolish ye be t' have pictures on th' wall, an' paper, too, an' carpet t' walk over."

"I buildin' no house am!'

A smile came over his stern-set countenance, and his eyes seemed to be looking at something he saw in the distance through the window.

"Then a barn it is."

"An' a barn it ain't. People don't barns build granite stones of."

"Perhaps yer goin' a roadway t' make."

"Commoner stone fer that does. Granite wouldn't s' soon break."

"Ye ain't yer fields ploughed."

"Ner ploughed th' ain't goin' t' be."

"Ain't ye no wheat, corn, an' rye, an' tobaccer goin' t' raise?"

"Ye'll that see in a month mebbe — jist wait."

The smile had not left his face, but seemed to grow brighter, making his countenance appear almost handsome, and robbing it of its habitual expression of melancholy sternness. Mrs. Miller had seated herself in a chair by the mantel, but her brother had walked over to the window, his hands clasped behind him. He seemed now less reticent to speak, and watched the changing expressions of his sister's face, as if he found delight in her growing anger, which she made no effort to hide. His naturally gruff voice was almost sweet in its softened intonations.

"Ye needn't aroun' th' bush beat, Melie — I know fer what ye've come, an' though I don't none o' yer business think it, I won't ye waitin' keep. It no house ain't, ner barn, ner road. It's a wall — a wall o' stone — a long wall an' wide one, with all th' fields made into one. It's goin' t' a graveyard be, er a cemetery as they call it in th' city. Yes; it a cemetery is, fer that's much larger than a graveyard, an' mine 's goin' t' be as big as my lands 'ill make it."

"I knowed it — I it knowed. It crazy yer gone, an' that I said. What man in senses right would make lands, that money brought, a cemetery into."

"Well, th' land's mine, an' it ain't yours never goin' t' be. Pop you th' money gave, and he th' land gave t' me. I guess ye thought ye'd all it git when I was dead. I said that night ye turned Barbara out, ye'd never a cent o' mine git. It's long ago — ain't? I ain't forgot once. I was a coward t' 'ever let ye her treat as ye did, an' I wasn't any man t' not marry her, even though pop wouldn't me th' land give. Fer any other person I ain't never cared. She might o' lived if ye had her taken in, an' I would o' paid ye fer it. Well, it ye didn't do, and no cent o' mine git ye will."

"But there's law, Hen — law there is. Yer crazy — that ye are, an' law kin stop ye doin' what yer goin' t'. What does a ceme-

tery have with Barbara t' do ?" She nothin' was worth, an' liked th' enemy more than Gott."

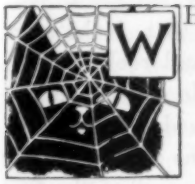
"Well, I wouldn't o' put a dog out th' way ye her did. I her buried jist as I would if her had been my wife. Then these years I've been thinkin' what them people do that ain't got none t' bury them, an' I t' myself said I'd leave my fields where anybody could be buried, even a dog, an' they'll have a stone, too. I've watched th' wheat with th' dew sparkling on it in th' mornin,' an' I've watched it at sunset wave, an' I said my cemetery I'd call Acres o' Gold, fer wheat like gold looks, an' that I've grown more than corn. I kind o' feel Barbara knows what I goin' t' do, an' I've it all done in memory o' her. You go t' law, but ye won't any good git. I've had it all tended t' down Lancaster at. I ain't crazy. I guess all good actions like carrion stink when money lost them through. Now, ye go an' do what ye want. I didn't fer ye send, an' I don't any more want t' see ye."

His sudden exit from the room arrested the words that rose to Mrs. Miller's lips.

When the loveliness of summer lay over the land, it found the completion of Henry Mennon's wishes, for his fields were walled with stone, and already some of the city's poor had found a resting place there. They were truly acres of gold — the tombstone of a man's noble remorse.

Where Burglars Are Welcome.*

BY FRED S. BROWN.



HEN the veteran detective sergeant retired from the force he invested $20,000 of his savings in a roadhouse. The house was situated in the vicinity of a colony of wealthy cottagers, who drove fast horses and automobiles, and enjoyed a good meal without grumbling at the price.

The ex-sergeant's roadhouse soon gained a reputation that caused it to bring in a revenue that astonished even the proprietor himself. The prosperity of the place was so well known that it is not surprising that, one night, a burglar made his way into the establishment.

As the burglar approached the safe he intended to rob, the light from his electric lamp revealed the fact that the safe was open. Judging from the scraps of checks and some small coins scattered about the floor, another thief had preceded him.

As the burglar cautiously swung his lamp to the left, the shaft of light fell on the body of a man lying on the floor.

Bloodstains and bruises showed that the prostrate man had been dealt several blows. The burglar listened intently, but could hear no sound of breathing. Strong as his nerves were, he felt a thrilling chill creeping over him as he realized that he was in the presence of a murdered man. The burglar stood gazing at the corpse, frightened, but fascinated. He forgot about his errand as he stared at the ghastly figure on the floor, and wished that the corpse might come to life. Then he would not be afraid. He could fight the living man and render him helpless without killing him. Of that the thief was confident, because he had never had to take a human life, although he had had many encounters with men whom he had robbed. The first burglar had been a bungler. He

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need not have committed murder. So thought the man who stood and studied the silent, motionless thing that lay before him.

Yet he feared to approach near enough to the body to touch it. His terror was so overwhelming that his faculties were, in a measure, paralyzed, and he will never know how long he stood there, in benumbed fright, before he realized his danger.

At last it occurred to the shivering burglar that, if he were caught there, he would be accused of murder and robbery. He was aware that, in that event, nothing but suicide could save him from the electric chair. Even when he recognized his own peril and thought how absurd it was to remain where he was, especially as there was no chance for any profit after the visit of the first thief, the trembling robber could scarcely force himself to leave the scene that filled him with the agony of fear.

But, in time, the thief regained his mental equilibrium, and quit the roadhouse. As there was nothing regarding the murder in the newspapers of the next morning, the burglar surmised that news of the crime had not transpired in season for the early editions. But as the day progressed and he heard no rumors of the murder, his amazement grew apace until the afternoon newspapers appeared without a mention of the tragedy. Then the burglar was so astounded that he could scarcely refrain from speaking of the crime to the persons with whom he came in contact in the summer colony.

But, even if he were one of the leading members of the colony, he knew that he could not afford to take the risk of being the first to mention such a crime as that which had been committed.

Unable to stand the suspense longer, the burglar drove to the roadhouse at 5 P. M., and ordered dinner. He fully expected to hear the murder discussed there, and depended upon that circumstance to afford an opportunity for him to relieve his mind.

But not a word was said about the murder or robbery. There was not the slightest sign of excitement. Everything was being conducted in the usual, orderly manner. But the now thoroughly dazed burglar did not see the proprietor of the place, and, so fearful was the robber of arousing suspicion, he would not ask for the missing man. The burglar could not see the safe from the dining room, and, therefore, could not obtain an excuse from that quarter

for broaching the sole subject upon which his mind was centered.

As the burglar drove home, he wondered if the roadhouse people were keeping the crime secret for the purpose of detecting the criminal by luring him, through fatal curiosity, to the scene of the tragedy. Or could the whole business have been a dream? Or, worse, was he losing his mind and having hallucinations?

For hours that night the thief brooded over the different phases of the case as they capered through his brain. By an irresistible impulse he was drawn toward the roadhouse. At first he persuaded himself that he went there to see if the real burglar, confused by the mysterious silence regarding the crime, would return. Then the disappointed robber realized that it would be impossible to keep such a crime secret for a day in that thickly settled region, so he dismissed the theory of suppression of the news. If there had been no suppression of news there had been no news to suppress. Therefore, he must have been dreaming, or he was insane. If he had dreamed the murder and robbery, it was not too late to make a profitable visit to the roadhouse safe. If he did not settle the affair one way or another, there could be no doubt that he would become insane. The burglar could no more resist the impulse to enter the roadhouse than he could live without breathing.

Once inside, the robber quickly reached the little room containing the safe, and there lay the corpse that had shocked the burglar on the previous night. The safe was open, and coins and checks were scattered about the floor.

After casting a hurried glance around the room, the now completely terrified burglar turned off the light, and swiftly retreated.

"It was no dream," he mused. "Can it be that those people at the roadhouse don't know there has been murder done in that room where that — thing is? Are they under the impression that the landlord is away from home, and unaware of his fate?"

Suddenly the burglar stopped, whirled around, and walked rapidly back to the roadhouse.

"I haven't dreamed," he muttered, as though angry. "I am not crazy, but I have been a consummate fool. That corpse is what the ex-detective calls, in police parlance, a plant. Honest folks would call it a scare-crow. Knowing that an energetic operator has been busy recently in this community, and, having no confidence in

the police service, because of his experience in the business, the ex-detective has rigged up his 'plant' to deceive honest burglars. He came near fooling me, but, thank goodness, I have come to at last. He must have something worth while, or he wouldn't go to all the trouble he does nightly to install his chamber of horrors. And I'll stake my professional reputation that his money is right in that safe, the door of which is purposely left open to lead to the impression in the mind of a confiding robber that the strong box has been rifled by a member of his own craft. Any man that is guilty of casting such a reflection on the profession deserves to get just what that stupid dolt is about to receive at my hands."

Within a few minutes after having indulged in the above recorded self-communion, the burglar had re-entered the roadhouse, abstracted a large roll of money from the safe, and was once more on his way home, excusing himself for the commission of his crime by saying, as he always did, that it was for the sake of his lovely wife, who had no suspicion of his hazardous calling.

"We will see, now, whether there will be anything said about it," said the burglar to himself, as he turned in at 2 A. M.

But there wasn't. Once more the burglar was mystified.

After waiting for the evening editions of the daily papers, and seeing no mention of the roadhouse robbery, the burglar again rode over to the ex-detective's place for dinner. As on the day before, the business of the establishment was being conducted as usual, and there was nothing to indicate the knowledge of a robbery on the part of the persons present.

But this time the proprietor was in evidence. When the burglar had finished his dinner, the landlord took a seat opposite his customer and invited him to have a cigar, at the same time laying on the table in front of the burglar a reversed check for the meal.

The two men smoked and chatted about politics and other topics of the day for fifteen minutes before the burglar picked up the check and looked at it. He saw it was for $5,000.

As he did so, he gave a violent start and exclaimed:

"It was only a thousand ——"

"We will call it $5,000," coolly put in the ex-detective. "I will go with you if you have to go anywhere to get the money, but you don't get out of my sight until I get the five thousand."

Within two hours the money had been paid to the ex-detective. As the two men were then on an even footing in the matter of crime, the burglar said to the landlord:

"I confess I don't understand why you lumbered up that room as you did. What was all that truck for? What was your object?"

"It was to protect my money. I knew it was almost a certainty I would have a call from a burglar, and I expected that he would be a common, ignorant ruffian who would be frightened away by the grewsome spectacle, but it seems that I was mistaken. It did not scare you apparently."

"It frightened the wits out of me the first night I was in there."

"Were you there more than once?"

"Certainly. Didn't you know it?"

"No. I didn't know you were there at all until you divulged your guilt by the start you gave and the exclamation you made when you looked at the check for your dinner this evening. I was away when the job was done. When I found I had been robbed I concluded that I would say nothing about it until I had tried the simple test that caught you. It occurred to me that the thief who robbed my safe in the face of the horrible exhibit made to keep robbers at a distance must be a man of intelligence and nerve. I surmised that such a man would do the wisest thing that anybody guilty of the robbery could do; that is, come to the place and avert suspicion by leisurely eating a meal while he made observations. I hit upon the $5,000 check scheme, and you were the fifth man I tried it on. The other four accepted it as a joke or calmly said I must have been drinking to get twisted like that. Of course I apologized, and had the check corrected."

"If I had pretended to take it as a joke or told you you had been drinking, would you have apologized to me?"

"Certainly."

"Good night!"

"Good night. Call again!"

Do Not Talk with the Motorman.*

BY E. H. MAYDE.

I DID. But I had a perfect right to do so. It was the night of the great snowstorm four years ago. I had arrived in Boston that morning and had lunched with Bob Fairfax at Sam Coy's — steamed clams, of course. And when, after luncheon, Bob said, "Why don't you go out and have a chat with Polly this afternoon?" I, never having dreamed of doing anything else, replied, "Good idea! Don't know but I will. But I have to get out to Wellesley to-night," I added.

"All right," said Bob; "the electrics pass our house. You can go over in an hour."

"Make good time in this kind of weather?" I asked.

"Oh, first-rate! This is nothing. You've lived South so long you've forgotten what a good storm is like."

"It seems reasonable to suppose my memory will be refreshed on this occasion," I answered, and picked up my traps to start.

"Why don't you leave that monstrous parcel here?" asked Bob.

"*That?*" I ejaculated. "That's what is taking me to Wellesley."

"Well, it's big enough to take you," said Bob, "though, trusting merely to the sense of sight, I should have thought you were taking it. May a life-long friend inquire —"

"Sure!" I answered. "It's a ham."

"A *ham?*"

"Yes, a *ham* — h–a–m."

"But why in thunder are you taking a ham to Wellesley?"

So I explained to Bob that it was a Virginia ham, which Miss Diamond Dyer had entrusted to me to deliver to her niece at the college. And I further explained that Miss Diamond had a way of cooking a ham that made it even more delicious than an ordin-

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ary Virginia ham, although an ordinary Virginia ham is as far above every other ham as heaven is above those regions where the souls of the condemned are — detained.

It seemed to amuse Bob greatly, and when I was half way across Atlantic Avenue he called me back to ask if he couldn't add a couple of pork chops to Miss Dyer's gift.

I went out to their pretty home on the Boulevard, and talked over old times and old friends with Polly until it was time to continue my journey.

"That car ought to be here in five minutes," I said, as I got into my coat.

"Can't you leave that huge bundle here until you come back?" asked Polly.

"No, thank you," I said. "I'm taking it out to Wellesley to Miss Diamond Dyer's niece."

"Oh! Goodies from home?"

"Yes," I said, warmed by her evident sympathy — so different from Bob. "It's a ham."

"A *what*?"

"A *ham*," I said, "*ham*, you know, part of a p——"

"Why, of course I know what a *ham* is," said Polly, gurgling with laughter. "But don't you suppose the girls have ham to eat at Wellesley?"

"Not Virginia hams," I answered. And while the car, which had just come in sight, jerked itself slowly along the snowy rails, I instructed Polly, as I had instructed Bob a few hours before.

"I wish I had a few sausages to give you," called Polly, as I went down the steps. Married people are ridiculously alike!

The car bumped heavily along the rails. The wind hurled the hard snow against the windows, which were frozen beyond any power of rattling. A spirit of friendliness seemed to pervade the passengers, shut in from the furious storm, and they became reminiscent of storms in years gone by. A stout man with a beaming red nose leaned far forward, looked up and down the car, and then asked, "Anybody got a fork with 'em?" He paused a moment to let the question sink in. Then, "Just thought I'd like to stick it into my legs and see if they're cooked through," and he shook with merriment.

My own calves were just in front of one of the heaters and I felt little doubt as to their condition, though my feet and knees were icy.

"Hope you'll get through to-night," said the conductor cordially, as he took my fare. "You have to change twice. I'll tell you when it's time to get off."

It was at a most uninviting corner that he gave the information.

"Other car's due here now," he shouted, as I stepped out on the platform. "No tellin' when she'll get through, though. You might walk up the road a piece and wait at the hotel."

I stood irresolute. For a moment I almost regretted that I had become the guardian of that precious ham. Then I banished the unworthy thought, and set my face against the stinging wind. Miss Diamond had proudly told me that that ham weighed "twenty-fo' poun's," and I began to realize the truth of the statement. The snow was drifting and an icy crust formed as soon as it settled itself. I forced my way through the hard little hillocks, and had just struggled up the slope to the hotel piazza when I heard bells and shouts, and turned to see the car approaching. I hurried back to the street, but the car was no nearer than when I first saw it. It was behaving very oddly — backing, and then running ahead, and coming to a stop with a violent jar. I went down the street to meet it, now borne before the wind and nearly lifted off my feet, despite the ballast of that Virginia ham. Entering from the front platform, I saw that at least twenty of the passengers were schoolboys, who had evidently taken possession of the car and the situation. They extended the right hand of fellowship to each newcomer, and gave a detailed account of their two hours' trip over a distance usually covered in twenty minutes. One or two elders looked on with twinkling eyes and open amusement at their good-natured fun, and a pretty girl of twenty struggled in a conflict between inclination to laugh and proper decorum. Our eyes met more than once before we reached the Lower Falls. It was dark when we arrived there, notwithstanding the assistance given us by a snow-plow, and our merry companions had dropped off some time before. An elderly woman and two men walked on when the car stopped, and only the pretty girl and I turned our faces towards the little waiting-room in the drug store. She went directly to the druggist.

"Do you know how soon there will be a car for Wellesley?"

"Why, almost any time now, miss. Of course they aren't running exactly on schedule time to-day, but one ought to be along pretty soon."

She looked anxiously out into the storm, but it was fully twenty minutes before the car appeared. Meantime, I had made frequent trips outside to look for it, and had reported to my companion on each return. When it at last bumped down the hill, I said to her, "If you will allow me, I think you would better let me help you down to the car. This wind is almost too strong for you to stand against."

"Oh, thank you," she said, half uncertainly; "I had no idea it would be so bad. I reckon I ought not to have started."

The little familiar word gave me an idea. Evidently she was a Southerner. I risked all on a bold stroke.

"Pardon me; is it possible you are Miss Diamond Dyer's niece?"

"Why, how extraordinary!" she exclaimed. "How did you know?"

"Because you 'reckoned' and did not 'guess.'" We both laughed. "And I am Dr. Witherspoon, just arrived from Matthewboro, where, forty-eight hours ago, Miss Diamond gave into my keeping a — er — small parcel," (she glanced at the ham and her eyes twinkled) "which I was to deliver to you to-night without fail because to-morrow is your birthday."

"How *lovely!*" she exclaimed with enthusiasm, and slipped her hand confidingly into my arm as we stepped out into the storm.

We were the only passengers, and there was so much to talk about that we paid little heed to the blustering wind and snow until, suddenly, in a lonely stretch just after leaving Wellesley Hills, the lights went out and we came to a standstill.

The conductor and motorman consulted, tried new fuses, and finally both came into the car and sat down, beating their arms against their breasts.

"Are we likely to be delayed long?" I asked.

"No tellin'" came from the depths of the motorman's furs. "Power 's given out. May come on any minute, and may keep us here all night."

"I'm glad it's warm," came the soft Southern voice of Miss Dyer's niece out of the darkness.

"Sorry to tell you it won't be warm very long, lady, if we don't get any power on. The power gives us heat as well as light, you know."

"Oh, I never thought of that," said she. "How pitchy dark it is!"

"If you don't object to smoke," I began.

"I *love* it," said Miss Diamond's niece.

So I lit a cigar, and offered my case to the men, and soon three tiny gleams of light penetrated the gloom.

"This makes me 'most long for the sunny South," said the motorman.

"Been there?" I asked.

"Yes, sir; three years. Didn't think much of it then, and was glad enough to get back home, but I had one pleasant experience there."

"Yes?" I said inquiringly, for clearly he wanted to talk.

"I was in Matthewboro, Virginia, four years ago, when they put the electrics in there."

Miss Dyer's niece and I started.

"My woman wa'n't very strong," continued the motorman, "'n' our boy was kinder sickly, 'n' Sally's twin brother — he was workin' down to Matthewboro 'railroadin' — 'n' he give us the notion, 'n' helped us to get down there, 'n' I thought maybe a winter in the South 'd be good for 'em. I got me a job as conductor on th' electrics, 'n' we thought we was fixed.

"It's pretty enough country," he went on, "right in there among the hills 'n' valleys, 'n' one o' the prettiest little rivers you ever laid eyes on, turnin' 'n' hidin', 'n' then startin' up 'n' bubblin' 'n' laughin' right in your face. But the *folks* — *Sho!* (His tone expressed ineffable contempt.) There's them that thinks Boston's slow. A New York feller said to me only las' Thursday — no, I b'lieve 'twas Friday — he 'd be gosh-darned if he'd live in such a slow place as Boston. 'Young man,' says I, 'you may *think* she's slow, 'n' *say* she's slow, but that don't *make* her slow, 'n' I can tell you one thing that's Heaven's truth,' says I. 'Compared to some places *I've lived in*, Boston is a ragin' Niag'ra cataract 'n' a blazin' fiery comet combined,' says I. An' he said nothin' more."

"You were saying that the people," I began.

"Was slow. And different, too. Maybe they sorter stood off on account o' we bein' Yankees, but they didn't neighbor like what Sally 'n' me 'd been used to. 'N' Hiram he made some allusion to the 'Rebellion' one day, 'n' that kinder finished him up with his schoolmates 'n' the teacher, too. Hiram wa'n't very well, 'n' I guess we'd had to take him out o' school anyway after that, so his sickness had its silver linin', as every disease has, accordin' to Scripture. We'd come down in January, 'n' the spring was just beautiful. But the summer was awful long and hot, 'n' Sally 'n' Hiram they both had a spell o' fever, 'n' that made heavy doctor bills, 'n' then the road didn't pay very well, 'n' the men's wages was cut, 'n' long towards Christmas things begun to look pretty gloomy. Sally didn't complain none; she ain't never been one o' the complainin' kind. But three or four days before Christmas she says to me, 'It don't seem like Christmas nohow,' says she. 'The weather's so mild, 'n' all the winders open, 'n' then the stores all full o' firecrackers.' She says, 'it don't seem reasonable.' 'N' then after a minute she says, 'D'ye suppose we can get anythin' fer Hiram's stockin'?' I just hated to tell her how 'twas. The doctor he'd come over that very day 'n' said to me, 'I wouldn't bother you for that last five dollars on your bill — honest I wouldn't — but it's mighty hard collectin' these days, 'n' knowin' 't you get your pay regular, 'n' me having some children,' say he, 'they won't think it's Christmas at all without they have a yard full o' fireworks,' says he. 'N' so if you *could* oblige me—' 'N' of course I pulled out that five dollars 't I'd been savin' to lay out on Sally 'n' Hiram 'n' the Christmas dinner 'n' a show 't was comin' to town Christmas night. I didn't have fifty cents left for celebratin'. I kinder put Sally off 'n' said I'd see what we could do by Monday. Christmas come that year on Tuesday. Well, the next mornin' when I went down to the yard, the men was all standin' round 'n' talkin' 'n' one of 'em had a newspaper in his hand, 'n' he says, 'Look here, John,' says he, 'we're going to have a new kind o' Christmassing.' 'N' I went up 'n' looked at the paper where his finger was pointin', 'n' this was what I read:

A GOOD SUGGESTION.

To the Editor of the Southern Blade:

DEAR SIR, — May I have space in your columns for the following words? At this time of year much well-deserved sympathy is expressed for the overworked clerks in our great stores. There is another class of faithful workers who are little heeded at this busy season. I speak of the street-car conductors. The long hours, the crowded cars, the thoughtlessness of passengers who present a bill to be changed instead of the exact fare — all these annoyances and many more must tax to the utmost the patience of the tired men. Suppose that on Monday next each passenger who is able should pay a double fare, the extra nickel to be kept by the conductor? It would be a pleasant way of saying "Merry Christmas," and the many littles might make up a sum that would carry a message of good-will to those who serve us so constantly and so courteously.

CITIZEN.

MATTHEWBORO, December 21, 1893.

"'I declare,' says one man, 'look's if some folks had bowlfuls o' compassion after all.'

"'D'ye s'pose 't anybody 'll do it?" says a thin young feller 't was havin' a tough time. He 'd told me how the cut in wages had kep' him from gettin' his rent ready, 'n' his wife was side-tracked with a little feller, just a week old, 'n' he was awful worried. 'We'll see pretty soon, ole man,' says I. 'Don't you lose heart noways.' Well the nex' three days — sho!" (He interrupted himself) "I kinder ran on tellin' this tale, 'n' more 'n likely you 'n' the young man 'd ruther be talkin' o' your own affairs. You see motormen ain't allowed to talk none when they're on duty 'n' when the restriction's removed we just do *gab!*"

"Oh, *do* go on," said Miss Dyer's niece. "I *hope* the power will keep off a *little* longer."

Her genuine interest was unmistakable, and the motorman was greatly pleased. "Le's see; where was I?" he asked.

"The next three days," she prompted.

"Oh, yes! The next three days that notice appeared just the same way, only there was different tops to it — 'Remember the Conductors' 'n' 'Don't forget the Double Fares' 'n' that kind. Monday mornin' come, 'n' I went out on No. 34. We had a very good run through some o' the nicest streets, 'n' along out o' one o' the prettiest houses in town there come three ladies, laughin' 'n' jokin', 'n' a colored boy behind 'em carryin' the market basket. They got on in that flutterin' kind o' way women does,

like hens findin' their places on a roost, 'n' pretty soon five more passengers followed. Then I come in to take the fares, 'n' the young lady in the first party took out her purse 'n' says, loud enough for every one to hear, but not loud in a forward way, 'We must all pay double fares this morning, you know,' 'n' she handed out a dime. I started to give back the change, 'n' she turned as red as a rose, but she spoke up quite clear 'n' brave, though you could see 'twas hard work, for every one in that car was lookin' at her. 'No change to-day, thank you. It's just a merry Christmas to you."

"Well, sir, every passenger on that car paid a double fare, 'n' when the three came back from market they did the same thing again, 'n' of course others followed their lead. By noon I had three dollars 'n' forty-five cents in them extra nickels. There wa'n't much else talked about in the yard that noon. Calhoun Smith, the thin feller with the baby, he had four-twenty — that was the most of anybody. Of course the runs was different, 'n' in some parts o' town you struck a poor class 'n' didn't get no extras. But even Lombardy Cooper got fifteen cents, 'n' his run was right through Black Bottom 'n' round Billy Goat Hill. By night I had nine dollars 'n' five cents, 'n' I run up to the house 'n' told Sally 't I guessed she'd better skip out 'n' make purchases 'cause I was coinin' money like the Philadelphy mint. I had thirteen dollars 'n' sixty-five cents when I quit work that night, 'n' Calhoun Smith he beat me a quarter. He was the gladdest feller you ever did see. We didn't never find out who 'Citizen' was, but we put a card o' thanks into the paper for him 'n'—"

The lights blazed up. The two men sprang to their posts. The car trembled and jerked, then moved along towards Wellesley.

"'Him'!" said Miss Dyer's niece. "It was Aunt Diamond who wrote that notice. But I don't believe she ever knew how well it turned out."

I stepped out on the platform. The wind screamed past. I shrieked a question into the motorman's ear. He shook his head and pointed upward. My eye followed his finger and I read, "Do Not Talk with the Motorman."

The Monarch of Bobo.*

BY WILL LISENBEE.

OLOMON BROWN, able seaman, was addicted to theories. These did not always harmonize with existing things, but to him it was all the worse for existing things. Had he turned his attention to those simple duties that fall to the man before the mast, all might have been well. But he allowed himself to be carried away by the abstractions of theories. One of these proclaimed that certain men were appointed by Destiny to rule their fellow-men; another, that he, Solomon Brown, was one of those favored by Destiny. These theories conflicted with the convictions held by Captain Nelson of the *Petrel,* and when Solomon Brown stirred up a mutiny, there was an encounter between lawful authority and a theory, in which one of the mates was wounded, and the captain lost a piece of his ear. The theory lost.

The affair provoked Captain Nelson to the employment of a vigorous antidote for the mutinous spirit. Instead of placing the leader in irons to be carried to port for trial, he set him ashore on the island of Bobo — an uncharted piece of land lying in the South Pacific — leaving him a supply of provisions by which he might sustain life and thereby have the opportunity to nurse the remorse which was the price of the promulgation of untenable theories.

"Some time before the end of the year I will touch here and inquire after your health," the captain said, as the boat was pulled away from the shore, "and then, if you have been cured of your theories, I may give you a chance."

Then the boat was rowed back to the *Petrel,* the sails spread, and when the sun went down only a speck remained against the horizon to tell where the isle of Bobo rested.

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Some months later, when the *Petrel* touched at Melbourne, after a voyage to Hong-Kong, Captain Nelson paid his respects to Mrs. Brown, wife of the marooned mutineer. When he had explained to her that her husband had not returned in the *Petrel,* but had been set ashore on a far-away island to meditate on the evils of mutiny, he fully expected to have a flood of reproach poured on his head, but nothing of the sort occurred. She listened to the story with calm impassivity, and, when it was finished, remarked that she hoped that her husband's enforced sojourn on the island would cure him of his appetite for grog, and ended by inviting the captain to remain for dinner.

Captain Nelson was so well pleased with Mrs. Brown's behavior over the unfortunate affair that he invited her to take passage in the *Petrel* on the next voyage, as he expected to touch at Bobo and pick up her husband, an invitation which she gladly accepted.

So it happened that when the *Petrel* dropped anchor in the little bay at Bobo, just eight months after depositing Brown on its shore, the wife of the mutineer stood on the deck with Captain Nelson, and watched the lowering of the boat which was to bring her husband back to the ship.

She stood leaning on the rail as the captain and a dozen or so of the crew entered the boat and sped shoreward, and it was only after the men had reached shore and vanished from sight that she called the mate, and asked to be taken ashore, that she might meet her husband and surprise him before he reached the ship.

Meantime, having gone ashore, the captain and his men began to search for the marooned mutineer. Failing to discover any traces of him in the vicinity of where he had been left, they proceeded inland, making their way through clumps of dense tropical foliage.

As they passed on they looked for some sign of a habitation such as the cast-away might have erected for his use during the months he had been a prisoner on the island, but, as nothing of the sort was to be seen, Captain Nelson became uneasy in his mind. Many things might happen to a man who was compelled to dwell in the solitude of such a place for months, and the thought of the possibility of finding the bones of the mutineer lying bleaching in the sun gave him an unpleasant sensation.

Solitude alone had been known to drive men to suicide, and there were many other ways by which the castaway might have met his death. There were the fevers peculiar to the tropics, and various other ills flesh is heir to, not to mention the possibility of there being warlike natives on the island — cannibals, perhaps — who might have made a meal off the unfortunate Brown.

The spectacle of his picked bones lying about the ground, where some wild tribe had stopped for lunch, was not a pleasant prospect for the captain to contemplate. Not that he had any particular objections to the natives sating their appetites off the mutineer — remembering his marked ear — but the thought of bearing the tidings to Mrs. Brown filled him with dismay. The captain's thoughts, however, were quickly turned into a different channel.

Emerging from a thick clump of palms, the little party came into an open valley. A cluster of palm huts broke on their vision, and of a sudden the whole valley was swarming with life — fierce, black, warlike life — a horde of hideous savages. As if they had been lying in ambush for the adventurers, they sprang like magic from hollow, rock and thicket. With a swift manœuvre they cut off the retreat of the captain's men, and advanced in solid lines.

They were ugly looking customers, armed with spears, guns and villainous-looking bludgeons barbed with vicious spikes. The sailors were armed with nothing but knives, and the pistol carried by the captain was the only weapon of the kind possessed by the party. Captain Nelson was a brave man, but he saw the futility of giving battle. Against fifty to his one there could be but one result. He resolved to capitulate — to learn first of all what the natives meant by their hostile demonstration, and then, if it must be — to fight. But first he would exhaust all diplomacy.

But even as these thoughts were passing through the captain's mind, there was a sudden and mighty rush from every quarter. With the agility of monkeys the stalwart natives threw themselves upon the captain and his men. For a moment they fought desperately, but to no purpose. In a twinkling they were made prisoners, and ushered into a large stockade. In the center of the enclosure was an immense palm structure, and into this the prisoners were led. As they entered they glanced about them, and then stood stock still with amazement.

At one end of the building, on a sort of raised platform, ornate with barbaric decorations, a dignified personage sat on a throne of gaudy aspect. The homage paid to him by the concourse of blacks proclaimed him a king, but it required no second glance for the captain and his men to recognize in the monarch of Bobo the familiar features of Solomon Brown, the ex-mutineer.

He surveyed the astonished group of his countrymen with a scrutiny befitting the dignity of a king, but he gave no sign of recognition.

The captain essayed to speak, but the ex-mutineer stopped him with a wave of the hand.

"The king is about to speak," he said, "and when the Monarch of Bobo opens his mouth, even the winds are silent."

He took no heed of the look of disgust on the captain's face, but calmly proceeded:

"In the King of Bobo you see a justification of the theories promulgated by your former shipmate, the unfortunate Solomon Brown. His contention that he was appointed by Destiny to rule was spurned by his associates. To him this proved nothing. He only waited for his opportunity. It came. It seems like the irony of fate that the very blow that was meant to destroy his last hope should elevate him to a throne."

He paused, and regarded his auditors with lofty contempt. There was a sinister look on his face, a look that revealed an inflexible and merciless purpose.

Captain Nelson made no reply. In the throw of Destiny the dice had turned against him. He could frame no words of apology for what he had done, even if he had been disposed to sue for clemency. The die was cast. The mutineer had won. It galled the captain to see insubordination thus triumphant and rewarded with power. He would have liked to throttle the vagabond, but discretion checked the impulse.

"I see you recognize me," went on the Monarch of Bobo with a hideous leer, "but the hand of oppression has cut the bonds of friendship between us. When you set me on this island to be eaten up by solitude or the natives, that was your day. Today is mine. I rejoice that it is so. Soon after you left me here I fell in with a band of natives, and they made me a prisoner. They

took me to their village, and when they had sized me up, they came to the conclusion that the most profitable thing to be done was to barbecue me. That was not a pleasant situation — for me. It set my mind to work. Something must be done, and the incentive to do it was prodigious. Here was a chance to show Caucasian superiority over the dark-skinned progeny of Ham. The mere appetite for food, when not reinforced by actual starvation, is not the strongest of human desires. Man will often neglect the calls of his stomach to provide entertainment for the mind. A brilliant thought came to me. By furnishing entertainment for my captors I might induce them to postpone their intended feast. By some skilful sleight-of-hand tricks I gained their attention. As I proceeded, they grew more and more enthralled. I put forth all my skill, and went on and on. They pressed about me. Their interest grew into amazement, amazement into wonder, and wonder into superstitious awe. From that moment all thoughts of the barbecue were forgotten. It is a long step from a fricassee to a throne, but before the sun had set they made me their king. It was the victory of the mind over the mind. They placed before me all the wealth of the tribe. They feasted me, they prostrated themselves before me, and endowed me with nine wives. As the Monarch of Bobo my word is law. I should have only to lift my hand, and I should be avenged for all the indignities that have been heaped upon me. The minds of my subjects would again revert to their stomachs, and my persecutors would be butchered to make a Boboan feast. But I wish to train their minds into civilized channels. To devour an enemy is to destroy his utility as a slave. The dexterity of the whites enhances their value as servants. A few white slaves will give prestige and dignity to my authority, and that is why I spare your lives. If I tire of you as slaves, the stomachs of my subjects will always be ready to give me relief. It is pleasant to be a king."

He paused and watched the effect of his words on the prisoners.

The captain's face was a study in humiliation and anger, but he knew he could say nothing to help the cause of himself and shipmates. And the Monarch of Bobo, reclining on his tawdry throne, smoked a pipe of prodigious size in silence.

He did not see the face that was glued to an opening in the

structure, nor the pair of scintillant eyes that was fixed upon him. But even as he ceased speaking, a form pushed through the opening, and entered the enclosure. As the curious gaze of the monarch rested on the figure his small eyes blinked with sudden energy. He arose and peered before him, his face working with emotion. Then, as he recognized the stern, implacable features of his wife, his form became rigid as if transfixed with terror. His face paled, and he tried to speak, but only a gurgling sound issued from his throat.

And straight toward the throne the woman marched, the wonder-stricken blacks falling back to let her pass. She never paused till she stood before the trembling monarch. Then, stopping, she fixed on him a look of withering scorn.

"A fine spectacle you are making of yourself with these niggers!" she said, with suppressed wrath. "A fine husband you are, to let your lawful wife shift for herself while you play king to a lot of apes!"

"'Manda ——" he faltered, but she checked him with a gesture of contempt.

"Don't you dare speak till I am done," she warned. "I have heard every word you said. So, while I have been at home working like a slave, pinching and saving, you have been taking your ease, playing king with a lot of niggers and boasting of nine wives! — Oh ——"

Her voice rose to a shriek, and she made a grab for the monarch's ear.

"It was a joke, 'Manda," he cried, dodging about the throne. "I tell you, it was all a joke; you never could take a joke ——"

"A joke, was it?" she fairly screamed. "You dare tell me that? I'll make it a dear joke for you before I'm done with you, Solomon Brown! Don't you dare to say a word back," she warned, as he essayed to speak. "Order those niggers to release these men at once, and come with me back to the ship. Do you hear?"

"Yes — yes, 'Manda," he said. "I am ready to do anything you say." He made a signal to the natives, and they released the prisoners, and fell back. Then Mrs. Brown took the monarch's arm, and followed by Captain Nelson and his men, marched from the place. And thus fell the dynasty of Solomon Brown.

Within an hour they were all aboard the *Petrel,* which spread her sails and bade farewell to the island of Bobo. And as Solomon stood on the deck with his wife, watching it melt into the mists of the sea, he felt that in the turning of the die Destiny had again played him false, and with the disappearance of the island behind the wall of the sea, his dreams of empire vanished.

He never sailed in the *Petrel* again. There is a well-patronized Sailors' Inn in Melbourne, where both Captain Nelson and his crew often repair when in port. It is presided over by Mrs. Brown, and the whilom mutineer and monarch of Bobo, who figures only as porter, finds little time to promulgate theories or indulge in those abstractions which hatch mutiny and unfulfilled dreams of power.

The Girl with the Million Yen.*

BY A. W. NORTH.

NOW, Silas Wethergedge arrived at manhood down Bennington way, and as he was not appreciative of the beauties of the Green Mountains, nor satisfied with the worldly sufficiency of having an ancestry which figured in the days of the Hampshire Grants, he went West to seek his fortunes. In San Francisco Silas took unto himself a wife, and, to his greater material advantage, made money in Oriental trading and, best of all, saved the life of Ah Suey. Ah Suey was a Celestial of great mercantile standing and of high ancestral degree, and the business which his gratitude straightway directed towards Silas set rich profits to flowing into the Wethergedge coffers.

Ah Suey was only visiting in San Francisco at the auspicious time when fate allowed the merchant to save his life, and, before departing for his Oriental home, he drew before the eyes of the careful Silas rich pictures of the money which was to be made by an American in China.

Time passed, as is fitting in a story, but sometimes sad in real life, and the Wethergedge ledger showed more and more satisfactory balances. But dollars and the breath of life do not always keep pace together; at last Mrs. Wethergedge sighed her last sigh and died. Wethergedge buried her with due respect, and erected over her grave a very proper monument of Vermont marble, leaving a blank space on the stone for an inscription concerning his own virtues, the same to be filled in at the fitting time. Silas had never exhibited great affection toward his better half. Demonstrative people, in his estimation, generally took people in or were taken in, and, in his way, Silas was honest.

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* The writer of this story received a cash prize of $150 in THE BLACK CAT story contest ending October 12, 1904.

Now that he was a widower, however, Silas realized that his wife had been a good housekeeper, that he had cared for her, and that he was uncomfortable alone now that she was gone.

Silas had left no close friends in Vermont — he had made none in California. Deprived of his wife, his thoughts turned to the only other person who had ever seemed sincerely glad of his company — Ah Suey, his Oriental friend. Through constant commercial relations, their association had been continued to great advantage, and, to a suggestion forwarded across the ocean by Wethergedge that it might be diverting for him to enter into business in China, Ah Suey responded with rapturous fervor, sending glowing pictures of assured profit. Thereupon, Silas made sale of his business, deposited one hundred thousand dollars of the proceeds in various Vermont banks for a nest-egg in case of loss, and, with half a million, crossed the Pacific. In Shanghai he met his friend, and endured the feasting pressed upon him by Ah Suey, which he could not escape. After a week of this Oriental hospitality, Ah Suey and Wethergedge got down to business and established the shipping firm of Wethergedge & Ah Suey.

Again time passed. It seems to be a habit that time has got into, and, as a truthful chronicler, I cannot make it halt, even for the Oriental and Occidental firm. The firm prospered, and its members waxed more opulent than ever. Once only did Wethergedge return to his native country, and then he journeyed no farther than San Francisco. He was accompanied by Ah Suey. It was a brief visit, and Wethergedge rejoiced when it was over.

One day in the early fall, and about a year after his American visit, while engaged in conversation with his partner, Wethergedge suffered a stroke of paralysis. He realized that death was upon him, and stayed his friend, who would have hastened at once for a physician.

"Do not leave me, Ah Suey," he said. "I have but a short time to live. I remember my grandfather's death in old Vermont, and at the last he suffered as I am now suffering, and though my father died when I was in San Francisco, I then heard that he ended his days in the manner that his father before him had done."

Wethergedge gasped for breath before proceeding.

"We are worth several million, you and I, Ah Suey. I wish you to continue the firm as it is. My interest therein is worth a million yen. You know I have no wife — no children."

Ah Suey listened attentively, at the same time watching his friend closely and observing, with Oriental knowledge, the near approach of the spirit of death. To the implied question he nodded a grave assent.

"My brothers and sisters are dead," Silas continued. "I had a niece, — Annabel Wethergedge. She married some time ago; she married — she married — "

He raised his hand to his forehead.

"I can't remember," he said, "the name of the man she married. They had one child, — a little daughter. You remember Annabel, the girl that you saw last year the day we left San Francisco?"

Ah Suey's eyes brightened.

"I remember. She seemed a good girl. If she were only a boy, though."

"That is the one, my friend. Ah Suey, the million yen go to her. You will find her and give it to her?"

"Be assured that I will, my friend. I will not partake of the festivities of the coming New Year until I have found your cousin and given her the million yen."

"I can trust you, Ah Suey," said the dying man, "and in return for your faithful observance of my wishes and protection of Annabel, I have given to you my Vermont bank deposits. Let the million yen stay where they now are; there can be no better investment for them."

Wethergedge sank back on the cushions. The Oriental put his arms about him and called out to his servants to hasten and bring physicians. There was nothing to be done, however. Silas's eyes contracted and gazed in strange directions. He began to choke. Words came brokenly and of matters beyond the ken of Ah Suey. Suddenly the dying man raised his head, turned towards his companion and said:

"Ah Suey, remember, she shall be the girl with the million yen." And he was dead.

. . . . . .

Leaving the body of his late partner resting in Celestial soil,

Ah Suey crossed the Pacific and landed at San Francisco, accompanied by a small but sumptuous retinue, and intent upon executing the wishes of his friend. With Oriental suspicion of his own Consul, he straightway sought out a Federal Commissioner, with whom on his former trips he had become acquainted, and for whose integrity he had great respect, explained to him the object of his visit, and besought his advice. The interview over, the old merchant sallied forth from the Commissioner's office, armed with much wise counsel and, in pursuance thereof, engaged the services for the entire time until the commencement of the Chinese New Year festivities, of J. M. Holmes, an able, conservative, and resourceful attorney, agreeing to give him therefor a fee of fifty thousand dollars, contingent upon success, in addition to whatever sum the heiress might be willing to pay. The formalities were settled at the Commissioner's club and Holmes repaired at once to his office, jubilant over the employment, his mind already teeming with schemes to be tried.

Now, Holmes's office force consisted of his clerk, Delancy Forrest, and Miss Merrill, his stenographer. The former, as a somewhat recent graduate of the University, where he had been a prominent fraternity and social individual, and, as a senior in the law college, was greatly impressed with his importance. But beneath this impression, and the good looks which accompanied it, Holmes had, from the first, discerned business energy and extreme audacity, qualities bound to be useful in the legal profession, and not useless beyond it. For her part, Miss Merrill was a quiet, slender young lady, of modest demeanor, possessed of an abundance of dark hair and with fine eyes and a sweet smile. She dressed quietly, wore becoming hats, and her small feet were always well shod.

Introductions thus concluded, the thread of this story may resume its unwinding, with Holmes seated in his private office, his associates near him: Forrest, expectant; Miss Merrill, pencil in hand and writing pad on knee, calmly awaiting dictation.

Holmes, with his usual precision, began as follows:

"Miss Merrill, take this dictation, please: 'A fortune for a girl. Attention, Vermonters, in particular! If the young girl who within the past two years saw her cousin, Silas Wethergedge,

formerly of Vermont, will apply to the law offices of John Marshall Holmes, 14th Floor, Mills Building, San Francisco, she will learn something to her great advantage.'"

Forrest's eyes danced. "That sounds delightful," he exclaimed. "Will you give us the key?"

"Yes. This Wethergedge left Vermont years ago as a boy, made money here in San Francisco, and then went into business in Shanghai with some sort of a mandarin called Ah Suey. Wethergedge died last month in China, leaving his partner one hundred thousand dollars deposited in Vermont, and entrusting to him a million yen for a cousin named Annabel. It seems he left no surviving wife, issue, nor brothers or sisters."

Miss Merrill's cheeks were flushed.

"Mr. Holmes, did you say a '*cousin*'?" she asked.

"Yes; bless those Orientals! With them every one is a cousin. Old Wethergedge didn't know nor remember this cousin's last name. He had met her here a year ago, it seems, however. Ah Suey saw her then, and can recognize her at the proper time, but the Chinese haven't much use for women, and he only wants to be called in when we have sifted down the claimants. Meantime we are to search for a young girl bearing the given name of Annabel, a cousin to Silas Wethergedge, formerly from Vermont. She has, according to Ah Suey, dark eyes and hair and big feet. She saw her cousin here in San Francisco on the 20th or 21st of July, a year ago. Ah Suey says he will keep the exact date and place of meeting to himself for a while."

"Is she supposed to be single, Mr. Holmes?"

"Yes, Forrest, she is; and you are not supposed to marry her until the million-yen matter is settled to Ah Suey's satisfaction.

"I would not want to until it was unquestionably settled on her."

"Your work is cut out for you in this matter, young man. I expect you to have the notice just dictated published in every daily in this city, and in the Sacramento, Stockton, Oakland, Fresno, Los Angeles and San Diego dailies. You will also post copies of it in every Vermont State society in California. If that does not succeed, you can get hold of the different county registers and discover in what localities there are any groups of

Vermont-born men. As for you, Miss Merrill, I expect you to question every girl who calls regarding the notices. When you find a dark-eyed one with the given name of Annabel and claiming to be a cousin of old Silas, keep her for me to cross-examine. Wait, though, unless her feet are large, let her go."

"What do you call large feet, Mr. Holmes?"

"Well, — well — that's a comparative matter. Under any circumstances, I wouldn't call yours large."

In the midst of transcribing the shorthand notes which represented Holmes's dictation, Miss Merrill's fingers came to an abrupt halt over the keyboard of her machine; the dashes and crooks merged before her trained eyes into the single word, *cousin*. Considering deeply, she weighed the word and its meaning. Now, for so well-trained and rapid a stenographer, this was most unwarranted, but a million yen is a tidy sum to think on, and Miss Merrill's mind was still endeavoring to assimilate her chief's announcement. Cousin! Why could it not have been niece, and then — for her first name was Annabel! Silas Wethergedge, formerly of Vermont, had been her mother's uncle; she, therefore, was his grand-niece, and, moreover, she had bid him good-by at the O. & O. Steamship Docks in July of the preceding year.

Still, she knew that Annabel was a frequent name in the Wethergedge family, and she also knew that that family, true to its Vermont blood, abounded in nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, and grand-aunts, half-cousins, and every other known variety and species of proper relationship. And it certainly was very probable that others of the tribe had been in San Francisco that July. In a general way, she knew from her mother's stories that she was descended from a fine old Vermont family, but of lines of descent and individual relatives she knew little, except that her father had died when she was a small girl. Silas Wethergedge, however, must have kept well posted, for had he not been able to locate even her who had merely a misty knowledge of the existence of an "Uncle Silas"? How many others of the family might he not have reached with letters on that July visit of his! How —

"Let me have those notices, Miss Merrill. When there's a prospect of a millionairess walking into this office I want to

facilitate with all speed the materialization of that prospect. Even if she has big feet and has such a name as Annabel, she'll look good to me. What! you haven't finished transcribing yet? This matter shouldn't disturb you."

The day's work over, Miss Merrill stood before the mirror, straightening her hat and putting on her gloves, preparatory to leaving the office. Looking downward, her glance rested on a well-shod foot.

"Well, well," she thought, "I may not have a million yen, but I certainly haven't large feet."

The first responses to the advertisements were made by the usual type of professionals, with a sprinkling of curious Vermonters who had known members of the Wethergedge family. Then a letter from Los Angeles called Holmes southward, and during his absence a probable claimant appeared.

Miss Annabel Warner was the daughter of a Wethergedge aunt, the youngest of the many with whom Silas had been blessed, and she was the child of her mother's middle age. Annabel was a good, sincere girl, warranted not to set the world afire with her brilliance. Forrest questioned her, and read with avidity the letter which she showed, wherein Silas Wethergedge invited her to meet him at his hotel on July 20th of the preceding year. Miss Merrill took note of the dark hair and eyes, and observed that the visitor kept her feet well hidden under her skirts. From this, the office-trained young lady was satisfied that Miss Warner's extremities were large. To make sure, she dropped a book over one of the hidden members; it was moved quickly to the side.

Yes; the claimant's feet were not very small. Nevertheless, the fastidious Forrest, when advised of the fact by a prearranged nod, gallantly offered to escort Miss Warner to her lodgings, and during the balance of his chief's absence the generous young gentleman devoted himself to giving that young lady a good time, and left the office almost entirely to Miss Merrill's care.

Time is precious — this chronicle must not loiter. Holmes grew ill and his absence was extended; without him Miss Merrill found the office dull; Miss Warner, in Forrest's attentive care, found no cause for complaint, and that energetic young man, hav-

ing long since perused Japanese coinage tables and found the American value of a million yen, did not cultivate any shyness. Meantime, the Chinese New Year drew nigh.

Upon Holmes's return his stenographer was sympathetic over his illness, his clerk was an engaged young man. The sympathy appealed to him, the new and unexpected airiness of Forrest provoked him. Dispatching the latter for Miss Warner and telephoning for Ah Suey, he awaited in nervous suspense for the verification of his hopes. With the thought of a fifty-thousand-dollar fee — perhaps even more, came visions of a year for travel and study. It would be good to have a rest, to escape the grind of detail, to get away from the over-important Forrest, to leave — But how could he get along without Miss Merrill! How much a part of him she had become he had never even dreamed until his illness; he had felt lost without her.

Calling her to him, he inquired with visible concern about her health, and catching his ardent glance, she looked down and blushed a good Vermont blush.

"Miss Merrill, if this yen matter comes out all right, I'll have something to say to you, well, not exactly about business. I — "

The sound of footsteps and the banging of doors interrupted Holmes and announced the arrival of Forrest and Miss Warner. They entered the private office while Miss Merrill retired to the outer. In a proprietary manner, Forrest introduced Miss Warner to his chief.

Soon the swish of flowing garments was heard and the attorney opened the door leading into his reception room just in time to see Ah Suey bowing deeply before Miss Merrill.

"Counsellor," the suave Oriental exclaimed, "I congratulate you upon your success, and this young lady," he took the hand of the astounded Miss Merrill in his own, "I wish to her all happiness with her million yen."

"But you have the wrong girl," broke in Forrest, "There is the cousin Annabel."

"I greet the cousin, too. I remember her. But this is the young lady whom my good friend bid to accompany him to the steamship landing. For this one do I hold the million yen."

"But there's a mistake somewhere. *Her* feet are not large."

"What do you mean, Delancy? My feet are not immense, either."

"Both of the charming young ladies have small feet for Americans," suggested the bland mandarin, "but from a Chinese standpoint they would seem large."

"And are the million yen really mine?" asked Miss Merrill, in doubtful tone of voice.

"They are. Here is a certificate evidencing your ownership of that interest in the firm, and this is a draft for one hundred thousand yen, your first year's income. What is the surname, — Merrill? I will insert it."

While the Oriental wrote, the four Americans stood by, stunned. With the documents in her hands, a deep flush overspread Miss Merrill's face.

"If you will excuse me for a moment, I have something to say to Mr. Holmes, — well, not exactly on business."

Ah Suey bowed gravely. The other two stood by, still too dazed to note what was going on.

Now, Holmes and Miss Merrill were absent in the private office several minutes, and though his usual manner of speaking was precise, and her ability at stenography was unquestioned, no record has been kept of what occurred. Let it suffice for this chronicle that at the expiration of those few moments Holmes appeared, more cheerful than ever, and Miss Merrill more blushing.

The centre of the scene, she volunteered immediate explanations.

"Henceforth I will require an attorney continually — law is dreadfully expensive. I have managed to settle my present account by retaining my new fortune and surrendering myself. I have — well, Mr. Holmes is engaged as my counsel for life."

Ah Suey's congratulations were spontaneous; in the midst of them, Holmes thus addressed his clerk:

"Forrest, it will be necessary for me to be absent for over a year. During my absence I shall be glad to leave my business to you, including the large Oriental interests which, thanks to the kindness of my friend Ah Suey, will henceforth constitute a large asset of this firm. I trust that you will settle down and marry some sensible girl during my absence."

At the last words Miss Warner, who had borne her disappoint-